

FEBRUARY 27, 1807.

Read the first and second time, and committed to a committee of the whole House, to-morrow.

A Bill,

To explain the act, entitled “ An act to prohibit the importation of slaves into any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States, from and after the first day of January, in the year of our Lord, one thousand eight hundred and eight.”



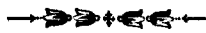
1 WHEREAS doubts have arisen, or may arise, touching the con-
2 struction of the eighth section of the act, of which this act is expla-
3 natory, and whereas congress disclaim and disavow all constitutional
4 right, title, or authority whatsoever, by any legislative act, in any
5 wise to abridge, modify, or affect the right of property of masters
6 of slaves, not imported into the United States, contrary to law, in
7 and to such slaves : Therefore,

1 Sec. 1. *Be it enacted by the senate and house of representatives of*
2 *the United States of America, in congress assembled,* That nothing
3 contained in the eighth or any other section of the aforesaid act,

4 shall be construed to abridge, modify, or affect, in any manner what-
5 ever, the full, complete, and absolute right of property of the
6 owner or master of any slave, such slave not being imported con-
7 trary to law, in and to such slave ; and such owner, or master, as
8 aforesaid, shall not be subjected to any disability, or liable to any
9 fine, penalty, or forfeiture, although such master, or owner, or his
10 or her agent may have transported any such slave, not being im-
11 ported contrary to law, with intent to sell the same, from one port
12 or place within the United States, to any other port or place, in a
13 vessel of less burthen than forty tons.

An Act

To prohibit the importation of slaves into any port or place within the jurisdiction of the United States, from and after the first day of January, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and eight.



1 Sec. 8. *And be it further enacted,* That no captain, master, or
2 commander of any ship or vessel “of less burthen that forty tons,”
3 shall, from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight
4 hundred and eight, take on board and transport any negro, mulatto,
5 or person of colour, to any port or place “whatsoever,” for the
6 purpose of selling or disposing of the same as a slave, or with intent
7 that the same may be sold or disposed of, to be held to service or
8 labor, on penalty of forfeiting, for every such negro, mulatto, or
9 person of colour, so taken on board and transported as aforesaid,
10 the sum of eight hundred dollars ; one moiety thereof to the use of
11 the United States, and the other moiety to any person or persons,
12 who shall sue for and prosecute the same to effect : *Provided how-*
13 *ever,* That nothing in this section shall extend to prohibit the taking
14 on board, or transporting on any river, or inland bay of the sea,
15 within the jurisdiction of the United States, any negro, mulatto, or
16 person of colour, (not imported contrary to the provisions of this
17 act) in any vessel or species of craft whatever.